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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 002511

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: STATE MINISTRY REGAINS CONTROL OF NGO REGISTRY,
SEEKS FUNDING FOR NATIONAL NGO CONFERENCE

Classified By: A/Polcouns Henry S. Ensher. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[11](#). (C/NF) Summary. State Minister Khadim has finally gotten full control of the NGO Registry Office previously managed by the Council of Ministries, and is planning to convene the Second National NGO conference. However, budget constraints and recent talk of eliminating all state ministries has impeded conference preparations and the state ministry 2005 work plan. End summary.

NGO REGISTRY OFFICE FINDS PERMANENT HOME

[12](#). (C/NF) State Minister for Civil Society Affairs (CSA), Ala'a Habib Khadim, told PolOff on June 12 that the NGO Registry Office (NGO RO) has finally completed its 6-month odyssey originating from the Ministry of Planning with a temporary stop at the Council of Ministries before finally settling at CSA. Khadim explained that his Ministry is now undeniably in charge of registering NGO's. The office can catch up on the backlog of 2,000 NGO registration applications.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE SECOND NGO CONFERENCE

[13](#). (C) Khadim outlined a plan for hosting the Second National NGO Conference scheduled for the end of June, a follow-up to the conference held last fall by the former State Minister Dr. Mamou Othman. Khadim intends to invite 800 representatives of the NGO community throughout Iraq, stipulating that at least 20 NGOs from each governorate will be invited. He concedes that most attendees will be coming from the Baghdad area. Conference objectives include promoting networking among NGOs, encouraging NGO opportunities in oft-ignored provinces, warning against NGOs that exist solely for the sake of member employment, stressing volunteerism among NGO members, and channeling civil society input into the constitution development process. Whereas last year's conference cost approximately USD 116,000, this year's budget has been trimmed to USD 80,000. Unfortunately, Khadim lamented, the conference remains unfunded despite his requests to the Council of Ministries and the Prime Minister's office.

STATE MINISTRY BATTLES FOR SURVIVAL

[14](#). (C) Khadim stated that while he pushes forward with his 2005 work plan, his ministry has recently come under threat by Secretary General of the Council of Ministries who suggested that all state ministries should be eliminated, in particular Women's Affairs and Civil Society Affairs. According to Khadim, the Secretary General regards state ministers as nothing

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more than government consultants.

COMMENT

[15](#). (C/NF) Khadim continues to both define his ministry while fighting for its survival. With his wife, Khadija al-Jabiry (a Baghdad Provincial Council member, women's activist, and head of a Baghdad NGO) serving as his key advisor, his ministry appears to be shifting from an "NGO control" focus to an advocate for the NGO community. However, this may not be sufficient to overcome both the Council of Ministry's desire to eliminate state ministries and the NGO community's wish to be free of government control and oversight.

[16](#). (U) REO HILLA, REO BASRA, REO MOSUL, and REO

KIRKUK, minimize considered.
Jeffrey